

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0296

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEWT, PO, BU

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE-BULGARIAN RELATIONS

REF: LISBON 841

1. PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR MENEZES CORDEIRO TOLD US IN CONFIDENCE FEB 15 THAT HE REGARDS THE AGREEMENTS RECENTLY SIGNED HERE BY SECRETARY OF STATE VERA JARDIM AS LARGELY WINDOW-DREDBWNG TO UNDERCUT A POSSIBLE CHARGE BY COMMUNISTS IN GOP THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFITABLE COMMERCE WITH EE COUNTRIES QERE BEING NEGLECTED.

2. MOST-FAVORED-NATION TREATMENT, FOR INSTANCE, HE SEES AS ALMOST MEANINGLESS FOR BULGARIANS CAME UP WITH LITTLE TO SELL TO PORTUGUESE, AND SINCE PAYMENT IS TO BE IN CONVERTIBLE CURRENCY IT IS UNLIKELY BULGARIANS WILL MAKE SUBSTANTIAL PURCHASES IN PORTUGAL, EXCEPT PERHAPS IN SHORT TERM TO INFLUENCE THE ELECTIONS. HOWEVER, THEY MAY NOW IMPORT PORTUGUESE CORK DIRECTLY RATHER THAN THROUGH AUSTRIAN INTER-MEDIARIES. THERE MAY ALSO BE INCREASED PURCHASE OF STEEL PLATE.

3. THE TALKS ON BULGARIAN ASSISTANCE AND AID TO
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PORTUGAL WERE A JOKE, MENEZES CORDEIRO SAID. BULGARIANS

WERE AMAZINGLY ILL-INFORMED ABOUT PORTUGAL, AND WHEN THEY OFFERED FORK-LIFTS AND ASSISTANCE IN SHIPYARD CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR WERE AMAZED TO LEARN THAT PORTUGAL ALREADY PRODUCES FORKLIFTS AND HAS HUGE SHIP REPAIR FACILITY ADEQUATE TO REPAIR SUPERTANKERS.

4. ALTHOUGH BULGARIANS MADE NO CONCERTED ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THEIR GUESTS POLITICALLY (BEYOND EXTOLLING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE REGIME HERE), MINISTER OF COMMERCE NEDEV LET DROP TWO REMARKS THAT INDICATED HE THOUGHT HE WAS DEALING WITH SOUL-BROTHERS: (A) THAT WHEN PEASANTS GIVE TROUBLE IT IS BEST TO TAKE AWAY THEIR LAND AND CATTLE IMMEDIATELY, AFTER WHICH THEY BECOME QUITE DOCILE; AND (B) THAT WHEN PEOPLE ARE UNEDUCATED POLITICALLY IT IS BEST NOT TO HAVE ELECTIONS TOO SOON.
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